



"Safer communities through successful youth."

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE CORRECTIONS

**5 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN
FY 2005 – FY 2009**

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MISSION

The Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections enhances public protection by changing the delinquent thinking and behavior of juvenile offenders committed to the Department.

VISION

Safer communities through successful youth

DEPARTMENT DESCRIPTION

The Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections (ADJC) is the state agency responsible for juveniles adjudicated delinquent and committed to its jurisdiction by the county juvenile courts. ADJC is accountable to the citizens of Arizona for the promotion of public safety through the management of the state's secure juvenile facilities and the provision of a continuum of services to juvenile offenders, including rehabilitation, treatment, and education designed to change their delinquent thinking and behavior.

GOALS

ADJC has four goals.

Goal 1: ADJC will develop law abiding behavior in youth by providing an integrated array of services based on individual needs.

Goal 2: ADJC will create a competent and diverse workforce.

Goal 3: ADJC will create a safe and healthy milieu for staff and youth.

Goal 4: ADJC will collaborate with stakeholders to contribute to the restoration of communities, youth and families.

STRATEGIC ISSUES

Over the next five years, ADJC's strategic plan anticipates three major strategic issues. Each of these larger issues poses operational challenges which are addressed by the Strategies outlined in the next section.

Turn-Over

ADJC continues to suffer one of the highest turn-over rates in Arizona State government. In FY 2004, ADJC's Department-wide turn-over rate was 29.6%. This rate was driven by ADJC's Youth Correctional Officer (YCO) staff. In FY 2003, YCOI positions had a turn-over rate of 48.7%. YCOI positions represent 23% of the Department's total positions.

This crushingly high rate of turn-over among entry-level staff has several important consequences for the Department.

First, high turn-over limits ADJC's effectiveness in providing committed youth with a safe environment and the treatment they need to become successful citizens. Changing the lives of the most difficult youth in Arizona's juvenile justice system requires a great deal of skill and knowledge. Those traits are gained and honed through experience. ADJC's current turn-over rate prevents most entry-level staff from developing the proficiency necessary to be highly effective with youth.

Secondly, high turn-over rates are an expensive and inefficient use of resources. In addition to the costs of recruiting new staff, ADJC must invest substantially in training for new staff. Before working with youth, each newly recruited Youth Corrections Officer attends a 5-week pre-service academy. While costly, this training is extremely important to equip staff with the basic knowledge needed to safely work within ADJC's facilities. The Department's high turn-over rate means that this investment in training is essentially wasted on many staff each year. In addition, high turn-over generally equates to high vacancy rates, which must be covered by costly overtime.

Turnover – Performance Measures

	Fiscal Year		
	2003	2004	2005
% of staff indicating satisfaction with their jobs	59	65	70
YCOI Turn-Over Rate	49%	35%	30%

More Difficult Youth

The Department has seen a significant shift in the type youth committed. Over the last three years, the needs assessments of incoming youth have shown an increasing prevalence of "special needs." For example:

- **Mental Health Needs** – The proportion of youth with mental health problems resulting in “exhibiting excessive responses which prohibit or severely limit adequate functioning, including clear diagnosis of problems such as depression, anxiety, psychosis, and suicidal gestures” increased 8 percentage points in two years from 32% in FY 2001 to 40% in FY 2003.
- **Violent Offenders** – The percentage of ADJC’s population exhibiting a history of violent behavior has increased more than 300% from 6.9% in FY 2000 to 28.0% in FY 2003.
- **Sex Offenders** – The percentage of youth assessed as using “sexual behaviors to attain power and control over others, harming and/or instilling fear in the victim” increased 200%, from 3.2% in FY 2000 to 9.6% in FY 2003.
- **Substance Abuse** – The percentage of ADJC’s population with a history of serious drug or alcohol abuse increased from 70.9% to 76.5% between FY 2000 and FY 2003.

These changes in the type of youth committed to ADJC have resulted in two operational challenges which must be addressed:

1. **Difficulty Meeting the Needs of Youth**
Unlike adult inmates who are criminally sentenced, juvenile offenders are civilly committed to ADJC for the purpose of treating their delinquency. This fundamental difference between the juvenile and adult correctional systems results in higher standards for treatment under federal law for juvenile corrections. ADJC’s facilities are currently being audited by the Department of Justice (DOJ) under the Civil Right of Institutionalized Persons Act (CRIPA), 42 U.S.C. §§ 1997a, *et seq.* A review of the findings of similar audits conducted in other states leads ADJC to believe that availability of “special treatment” services will be found to be insufficient.

ADJC’s current operations do not provide enough special treatment housing units to meet the more extensive needs of many youth. The higher staffing levels and greater clinical experience of employees in these units limits the number of such units permitted by ADJC’s current appropriation. The current number of special treatment beds available is far from meeting the need. For example:

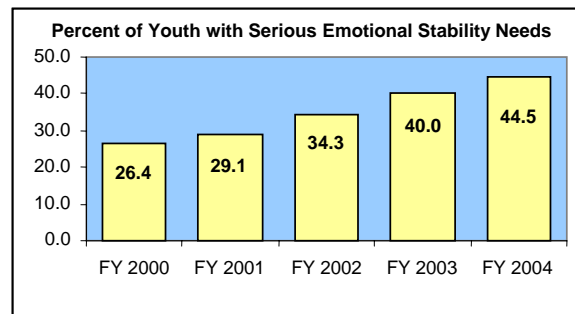
- **Mental Health** – Mentally ill youth require much higher levels of supervision, health care, psychotropic medication, and other forms of treatment to safely function. Anecdotally, ADJC is often seen as the only alternative for mentally ill youth in need of a secure setting as the Arizona State Hospital maintains only 16 juvenile beds. In FY 2003, ADJC received 299 youth with serious mental health or emotional stability needs. ADJC currently has

46 beds that are in special management units for youth with significant mental health issues.

- **Violent Offender** – In FY 2003, ADJC received 210 youth who were assessed to “use violent behavior to attain power and control over others.” ADJC currently has 45 violent offender beds.
- **Sex Offender** – In FY 2003, ADJC received 72 youth who were assessed to “use sexual behaviors to attain power and control over others, harming and/or instilling fear in the victim.” ADJC currently has 24 sex offender beds to treat these youth.
- **Substance Abuse** – By far, the most common special treatment need among youth committed to ADJC is a history of substance abuse. In FY 2003, 573 youth with serious alcohol or drug abuse problems were committed to the Department. Currently, ADJC has only one substance abuse special treatment bed per eight youth needing treatment.

ADJC recidivism research has found a strong statistical correlation between youth with substance abuse needs, mental health needs, or a history of violent behavior and recidivism. For example, a study of 3,624 youth released between 1996 and 1999 found that youth with substance abuse problems had recidivism rates 2% higher than those without a history of substance abuse.

More Difficult Youth – Performance Measure



2. **Juvenile Suicide**
Between April 2002 and April 2003, ADJC had three youth commit suicide. These represent the first successful suicides in the Department’s 12-year history. National research has shown a significant increase in youth suicides in recent years. Arizona has been disproportionately impacted by this trend and exceeds the national average.

Further, research has shown that youth in correctional settings are at even greater risk for suicide. One reason for this increased suicide risk is the high number of juveniles with mental and emotional problems. As noted above, the

proportion of youth committed to ADJC with serious emotional problems is increasing. ADJC must, therefore, address these risks.

As noted above, the Department of Justice is currently auditing ADJC's operations. A review of the findings of similar audits conducted in other states leads ADJC to believe that the Department's juvenile suicide prevention efforts will be determined to be inadequate.

Education

ADJC believes two legal mandates will have important impacts on the Department's operations over the next five years.

1. Education Program Statutory Compliance
Special Education – ADJC is required to provide services to youth with disabilities as mandated by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) §15-761, and A.R.S. §15-765 through §15-767. These services include delivery of special education instruction, speech/language services, occupation and physical therapy, and evaluation services for special education eligibility. In December 2001, an audit of ADJC's compliance with IDEA requirements found that ADJC was failing to adequately identify youth who are eligible for special education services. Since that time, ADJC has worked to bring its "Child Find" process into IDEA compliance, resulting in a near doubling of ADJC's special education population. In FY 2002, special education students made up 23% of total ADJC enrollment. Upon attaining full IDEA Child Find compliance, that proportion is anticipated to increase to 45%. This compares with a statewide special education average of 11% of total enrollment.

states, special education staffing is anticipated to be identified as a shortcoming by an estimated 12 special education teachers.

Section 504 Accommodations – Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires agencies, companies, schools, etc. to make accommodations for persons with physical or mental impairments which limit "a major life activity." As learning is defined as a major life activity, any youth who has demonstrated difficulty learning qualifies for reasonable accommodations to assist them. Given that 94% of ADJC youth have dropped out, been expelled, or were exhibiting serious truancy or school behavioral problems at the time of their commitment, it is conservatively estimated that 85% – 95% of ADJC youth will qualify for educational accommodations under Section 504. ADJC's current funding does not permit the Department to make these accommodations.

Recreation Staffing – Two separate mandates require ADJC to provide physical activity for committed youth. Federal case law has established a standard requiring juveniles to be provided at least one hour of large muscle exercise per day. In addition, physical education is a required component of all Arizona schools curriculum by the state board of education under R7-2-301. Within ADJC, recreation staff organize and supervise these activities. CRIPA audits in Louisiana and Georgia reviewed recreation staffing and required a ratio of 1 recreation staff person for every 20 youth. ADJC currently maintains a 1:40 ratio.

Education – Performance Measure

	Fiscal Year		
	2003	2004	2005
% of Special Education Youth	35%	45%	45%

Due to the dramatic over-representation of special education students within ADJC's school system, the Department struggles to meet its legal responsibilities for these youth. ADJC's school district is currently staffed at a uniform 1 teacher per 14 students. A CRIPA audit of Louisiana's juvenile education system led to a settlement requiring a special education teacher to student ratio of 1:6. A similar settlement with Georgia's juvenile corrections agency required a ratio of 1:10. ADJC has not received the findings from the October 2002 CRIPA audit of the Department's facilities; however, based on the findings in other

STRATEGIES

The strategies listed below address both the Department's strategic issues and ADJC's six goals. Resource assumptions are listed following strategies where applicable. Funding sources are abbreviated as follows: General Fund (GF) and other appropriated funds (OF). All amounts are shown in thousands. Each fiscal year represents incremental changes from FY 2004.

Comprehensive Classification

ADJC's most important strategy for improving recidivism rates for the increasingly difficult youth committed to the Department is to improve the Department's system of structured decision-making regarding individualized treatment interventions for youth. ADJC refers to this as its "comprehensive classification system." The comprehensive classification system will assist in determining appropriate secure housing, treatment programs, supervision levels, and community placement of youth based on the goals of the department.

Youth will complete an extensive diagnostic assessment process as the initial step in case planning. The assessment process will identify the juvenile's risk to re-offend, the dynamic risk factors causing or contributing to the juvenile's delinquent behavior, the protective factors that support non-delinquent behavior, and the responsivity factors that help staff approach a juvenile in the most effective and productive manner. For case planning purposes, three important assessment tools are:

- **Risk to Re-offend Assessment:** A statistical instrument that calculates the likelihood of re-offending in the community based on criminal and social factors
- **Criminogenic and Protective Factors Assessment:** A motivational interview and assessment adapted from the State of Washington that targets youth risks and strengths
- **Strategies for Juvenile Supervision:** An assessment designed to provide a case management strategy for those who work with juvenile offenders in the community and institutional settings

Each of these assessments has been recently validated or is based on current best practice in the field. The greater depth and accuracy of this assessment information will allow ADJC to provide more individualized treatment to youth. As noted in the Strategic Issues section, ADJC currently operates a relatively small pool of special treatment housing units focusing on mental health, substance abuse, sex offender, or violent offender treatment. The bulk of the Department's housing units provide a more general form of treatment. Research has shown that, despite

the fact that ADJC's most difficult youth are assigned to special treatment housing units, youth from these units have recidivism rates 4 percentage points below peers from general housing units. This equates to recidivism rates that are 15 % lower.

The comprehensive classification system is designed to tailor all of the ADJC housing units to provide specialized treatment for the criminogenic needs (i.e. needs that drive criminal behavior) of youth.

In summary, the comprehensive classification system will increase the safety of citizens, staff, and juveniles by:

- A more scientific targeting of treatment services based on a juvenile's risk and protective factors to provide an effective risk management strategy for delinquent youth
- Improving individualized approaches, ensuring a culturally appropriate and language proficient treatment plan for all youth
- Optimizing the use of ADJC resources by allowing the Department to focus on the highest risk youth
- Reinforcing the development of youth and system accountability through quality management techniques

The comprehensive classification system will be implemented using existing resources. However, monies will be needed for continuous specialized training.

Comprehensive Classification					
Fiscal Year	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
FTE					
GF		60.0	60.0	60.0	60.0

Make Facilities More Suicide Resistant

One critical strategy to prevent suicides within ADJC facilities is to make youth rooms more suicide resistant. Following the first of the Department's suicides, ADJC brought four teams of expert consultants into its facilities to evaluate every aspect of the Department's suicide prevention system.

These evaluations highlighted the fact that ADJC's facilities were not constructed with suicide prevention in mind. As a result, they provide numerous opportunities to secure a sheet, blanket, trouser leg, or t-shirt as a ligature for asphyxiation. Reducing the number of such opportunities frequently requires significant renovation.

Based on the expert's recommendations, in FY 2003, ADJC took advantage of a decline in its juvenile population to conduct \$1.2 million in suicide prevention renovations. These changes included replacing unsafe beds, desks, shelves, air vents, toilets, sinks, and door and window hardware. The Department focused these

changes on the housing units serving the highest risk populations – mental health treatment units and reception and assessment units.

During FY 2004, ADJC is concentrating facility suicide improvements in the separation and substance abuse units. ADJC has identified approximately \$800,000 for this one-time use because of the declining youth population.

Completing suicide prevention renovations for all housing units will require an additional \$2.6 million of the next two years.

Completion of Facility Suicide Prevention					
Fiscal Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
FTE	0	0	0	0	0
GF	661.7	1,940.3	0	0	0

Education Staffing

Special Education – ADJC's schools are currently staffed to provide one teacher for every 14 youth. CRIPA audits in other states have established the following minimum staffing ratios:

	Special Ed	Regular Ed
Louisiana	1:6	1:17
Georgia	1:10	1:15

ADJC believes a move to a staffing ratio of 1:8 for special education students and 1:16 ratio for regular education students would best meet the needs of youth. In FY 2005, these changes would require a reduction of 22 general education teachers and an increase of 34 special education teachers. The net result would be an additional 12 FTE positions.

Section 504 Accommodations – It is conservatively estimated that 85% – 95% of ADJC youth will qualify for educational accommodations under Section 504. ADJC's current funding does not permit the Department to make these accommodations. Approximately 10% of youth who qualify for a Section 504 accommodation require personal instructional assistance. As noted above with class sizes of 16 for regular education youth, one such youth is a virtual certainty in each non-special education class. In public schools, this assistance is typically provided by a teacher's aide or learning coach. Under the "No Child Left Behind" law, teacher's aides must be "qualified." A qualified aide must have an AA degree or have passed a state-proficiency test. In addition to the teacher, ADJC already includes one Youth Corrections Officer in each classroom. These positions could be upgraded to meet the minimum requirements for a teacher's aide at a cost of \$2,500 per position for ADJC's 27 non-special education classrooms.

Recreation Staffing – CRIPA audits in Louisiana and Georgia reviewed recreation staffing and required a ratio of 1 recreation staff person for every 20 youth. ADJC currently maintains a 1:40 ratio. Therefore, to comply with CRIPA's established ratio an additional 21 Youth Program Officer II / III FTE Positions will be required.

Education Staffing					
Fiscal Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
FTE	33	33	33	33	33
GF	1,401.7	1,401.7	1,401.7	1,401.7	1,401.7

Focused Recruiting

YCOs are asked to perform a number of different roles. Working with the difficult and often violent youth committed to the Department requires security knowledge and vigilance. Unlike most adult correctional systems, however, the focus of ADJC's activity is rehabilitative programming. Most of this programming is delivered by YCOs. As a result, YCOs must simultaneously act as a security guard, counselor, parent, and teacher for 24 to 32 teens. It is an extremely demanding, and sometimes dangerous job. Recruiting staff that relish and excel at this work is the key to improving ADJC's staff retention rate.

In the past, a growing youth population and high turnover rates caused the Department to focus its recruiting efforts on attracting a high volume of candidates. The Department's current decline in population has provided an opportunity to practice more targeted recruiting.

ADJC's Research and Development Section is working with facility leaders to identify and profile staff with exceptional performance and commitment. This information will then be used to target the Department's recruitment efforts on attracting similar staff. ADJC believes these efforts will yield a significant increase in the Department's retention of staff.

Recruiting improvements will be made using existing resources.

Competitive Compensation

In FY 2003, salaries for Maricopa and Pima County detention workers surged ahead of salaries for ADJC's YCOs. Entry level pay for a YCO I is currently \$24,954. By comparison, entry-level Pima County detention workers are paid \$29,039 per year. Maricopa County detention workers are paid \$31,179 annually. This represents a 17% and 25% higher entry-level salary, respectively.

These salary differences make it very difficult for the Department to compete for and retain quality staff. Over the next two years, ADJC will work to bring the salary of its staff to parity with their county detention peers.

Competitive Compensation					
Fiscal Year	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
FTE					
GF	2,058.2	4,116.3	4,116.3	4,116.3	4,116.3

At this time the Department doesn't know what changes DOJ will recommend. However, it is anticipated that their implementation will touch many parts of the Department and require additional funding. As soon as the department receives DOJ recommendations the Department will immediately assess current programs and resources and determine the additional needs. As various proposals are being discussed, the Department will ensure that constant communication is maintained with OSPB and JLBC analysts ensuring the most timely and accurate input of financial information for the FY 2005 budget cycle.

RESOURCE ASSUMPTION SUMMARY

	Incremental Cost of Strategies				
	<u>FY 2005</u>	<u>FY 2006</u>	<u>FY 2007</u>	<u>FY 2008</u>	<u>FY 2009</u>
FTEs	33.0	33.0	33.0	33.0	33.0
General Fund	4,121.6	7,518.3	5,578.0	5,578.0	5,578.0
Other					
Appropriated					
Federal Funds					
Non-Appropriated					
Total in thousands	4,121.6	7,518.3	5,578.0	5,578.0	5,578.0